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NATO? NO! EUROPE? YES!

The Editor

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THE STATE STEPS IN

R. Page Arnot

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COMPTON MACKENZIE

Memoirs of Gallacher

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Vietnam—D. N. Pritt; Immigrants at Work—D. Nandy
The Left in the United States—J. Williamson

JUNE 1966

Two Shillings

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Notes of the Month

NATO? NO! EUROPE? YES!

> The free world remains secure only so long as her peoples hold together. As allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation we firmly look on interdependence as a matter of principle.
>
> (Queen's speech at Brussels, May 9, 1966)

May 16, 1966

What is cooking? It is time for public opinion to realise where Britain is being dragged. On every side the approaching entry of Britain into the Common Market, the system for the economic division of Europe, has suddenly begun to be taken for granted as common ground of the three parties. Is this only an economic question? No. It is also a political question, just as much as was Locarno, Pan-Europe, Hitler's 'New Order in Europe' and all the other successive schemes for Western European capitalist unification against socialism. Simultaneously there is a flurry about the future of Nato, the parallel system for the military-political division of Europe. Nato, that evil inheritance of the cold war, has begun to show signs of disintegration as it approaches the completion of the twenty-year period of the treaty. France has given Nato a kick, with the demand for expulsion of the American occupying troops and bases. At this moment Britain's Labour Government is rushing forward as the grand champion of Nato. Britain is preparing to receive the expelled American troops and bases. Britain is proposing to reorganise and strengthen Nato in close association with the West German militarists and the Pentagon, and even, if necessary, without France. Britain is offering London for the new headquarters of Nato. Is it not time to wake up to what is being done in our name? On June 6 the Nato Council is due to meet to take decisions on these matters. Urgent as are the present developing battles at home, with Mr. Callaghan's deflationary budget striking at every household, and with the seamen leading the industrial front, it is essential at the same time, and in the closest unity with the battle on the home front, to alert public opinion over the major decisions which are preparing on a wider canvas to settle the future fate of Britain. There is no time to lose if the present dangerous orientation is to be changed.

Regal Signposts

The Queen's speech in Brussels was possibly more important than her speech in parliament. For the speech in parliament was only the

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traditional ritual form of publishing a ministerial programme. But her speech in Brussels was used to turn a ceremonial occasion into a belligerent political pronouncement—at the very moment of President de Gaulle's challenge to Nato. The Queen was sent to Brussels, not just to preach platitudes about popular friendship and co-operation, but to proclaim the clarion call for Nato—the opposite of popular friendship and co-operation. Similarly the Queen was sent last year in May to West Germany and West Berlin, even to the selfsame spots, to Bad Godesberg and Munich, where Chamberlain and Hitler had prepared the betrayal of Czechoslovakia and of peace, to proclaim in her speech the glorious unity of the British and German peoples to 'stand together in Nato' and 'defend Western civilisation'. In the same way not so long ago Prince Philip was addressing the Anglo-German Association on the same theme, even more openly designating Communism as the enemy:

> Europe is a very different place from what it was before the war. People in general are only too well aware of the danger of being ground to a fine powder by the upper millstone of Communism and the lower millstone of exterior economic domination. . . . Perhaps the most important reason why we should learn to get on with our European neighbours is that in the present struggle we are all on the same side, on the side of freedom against a system of slavery.
>
> (Prince Philip, speech at a dinner of the Anglo-German Association, November 15, 1960.)

A very fitting sentiment from the descendant of a Prussian princely house. But no better advice for Britain than the advice of Ribbentrop in the thirties. For indeed have we not heard all this tune before about the unity of the British and German peoples in the sacred cause of defending Western civilisation against the menace of Communism? Assuredly we have. It was the tune of the thirties, of Chamberlain and Munich and so-called 'appeasement', of all that is discredited today. The tune was discordant then. It is all the more discordant today, after history has exposed it.

Worse than the Thirties

Nowadays a lofty superior tone is taken towards the thirties in all the endless reconstructed versions which are being currently dished out by the official purveyors of culture in their tireless task of seeking to brain-dirty the younger generation with distorted contemporary history. How could the majority of the people have been so blind? How could they have been so foolish and besotted with pacifism as to fail to understand the menace of Hitler? Against this picture

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of the backwardness of the slothful people, 'When England Slept', during 'The Years that the Locusts Have Eaten', the official propagandists have the cool insolence to present, not the reality of the ruling class and their own official propaganda as it was at the time, not Baldwin and Chamberlain and *The Times* and the BBC and Halifax, but a highly stylised heroic ikon of Churchill as the One Man who saw, who warned, who called on the people during those years. Churchill, whom they boycotted then, whom they now try to make their mascot in order to hide the guilt of the ruling class, did indeed half-see. Blinkered by his class limitations Churchill only half-saw: he never recognised the significance of Spain as the first target of fascist aggression in Europe; he never combated the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, which was the real starting point before the Rhineland; he publicly lauded Mussolini and Hitler as national heroes. The Communists who really saw, who were really justified by the event, who exposed Munich at the time in parliament, while Churchill remained silent, are either left out from these official tarted-up versions of contemporary history, or are referred to, in relation to those who died in Spain, not as the first leaders of the fight of the people, but as pathetic quixotic idealists who were taken in by illusions about the Soviet Union. It is time to say to these purveyors of the current fashionable distortions of recent history: Drop your smug complacency about the weaknesses of the thirties. Turn your searchlight instead on the guilt of today, where education is really needed. For the shame of official policy today is in many respects worse than the shame of the thirties.

Beyond 'Appeasement'

The crime of the thirties was politely called 'appeasement'—that is, the British Government's conniving at German rearmament and the aggressive invasion of other people's countries, supposedly in the interests of peace, in reality through hostility to the Soviet Union and socialism. But the records of the thirties are today left far behind. Baldwin and Chamberlain and Halifax connived at the rearming of German militarism, in defiance of the wartime pledges to the ten million dead of the first world war and the signed treaty obligations to keep Germany disarmed. But Attlee and Bevin and Wilson and Stewart did not just 'connive' at the rearmament of German militarism, in defiance of the wartime pledges to the thirty million dead of the second world war and the signed treaty obligations to keep Germany disarmed. They took directly the leading role to put through the rearmament of German militarism under Hitler's generals,

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forced acceptance on an unwilling France whose parliament had indignantly turned down the proposition, and have built up the West German military power into the strongest army in capitalist Europe, with its generals also commanding British and French forces.

From Spain to Vietnam

Baldwin and Chamberlain proclaimed 'non-intervention' in relation to the fascist aggression against Spain, that is, refused the Spanish Democratic Government its right to arms and turned a blind eye to the invasion of Spain by German and Italian forces. But Wilson and Stewart have proclaimed open public support of the far more shameful and barbarous aggression against Vietnam by the invading American forces. Chamberlain and Halifax sought to play off Hitler against the Soviet Union with a show of manoeuvring between both, and to counter the Anti-Comintern Pact of the Axis fascist powers with the Four-Power Pact of Britain, France, Hitler and Mussolini. But Attlee and Bevin in 1949, the subsequent Tory rulers, and Wilson and Stewart today have directly resurrected the Anti-Comintern Pact in the shape of Nato, with the direct participation of German militarism, and reproducing all the familiar slogans of Hitler and Goebbels about the defence of Western civilisation against communism and the menace of Soviet aggression. This is the deadly policy whose manifest bankruptcy and discredit and simultaneous danger for the future is today reaching a climax. This time we can learn the lesson of the thirties. This time we can check the ride to ruin before it is too late. The battle is reaching a high point. This is the battle which is finding expression in the crisis of Nato and the crisis over Vietnam.

Crisis of Nato

Why is there a crisis of Nato? A hundred reasons can be given, equally in the changed world situation, the change in the balance of socialism and capitalism, the changed strategic situation, and the change in the balance of strength and relations within the imperialist camp. But the essential reason can be put very simply. Nato has been overtaken by history. Nato was a structure built on lies whose falsity has been exposed by the whole development of the subsequent years. Nato in its foundation enshrined all the illusions of omnipotence of the rulers of Western imperialism in 1949: the illusions of Western nuclear monopoly; the illusions of Fulton; the illusions of the future 'showdown' to force the Soviet Union to surrender to Western

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dictated terms; the illusions of the *Colliers Magazine* special issue depicting the GI military occupation of Moscow by the early nineteen-fifties; the illusions of Dulles dreaming of 'rolling back the frontiers of Communism' ('The United States must not stand idly by while any part of the world remains under the rule of either Communist or Fascist dictatorship'—Dulles, broadcast, February 10, 1952); the illusions of the U.S. Navy Secretary Matthews advocating 'a war of aggression' ('The initiation of a war of aggression would win for us a proud and popular title—we would become the first aggressors for peace', speech, August 26, 1950); the illusions of the proved mad Defence Secretary Forrestal. All this belongs now to a vanished age; it would sound incredible to the young today. But Nato remains. In place of the imaginary menace of Soviet aggression, under cover of which camouflage, just as with Hitler and his Anti-Comintern Pact, this sectional military alliance was built up, there remains the real menace of the rearmed German militarism, with its openly proclaimed expansionist aims, and the real extension of American military occupation over Europe and all over the world. All the initial pretensions of Nato are exploded. But Nato remains a menace. Therefore today the crisis of Nato becomes sharp.

A Structure Built on Lies

Nato has been from the outset a structure built on lies. The very title was a lie. The wildest dreams of geographers have not yet succeeded to discover the Atlantic flowing round the shores of Greece and Turkey. But the innocent geographical title was essential to conceal the reality of the bloc of Western imperialism and its satellites. The initial plea of a supposed menace of Soviet aggression against Western Europe in 1949 compelling the foundation of Nato was a lie,* long since universally admitted. The claim to represent a regional pact in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations was a lie, since the Charter of the United Nations expressly lays down that regional pacts may not take on any military obligations or fulfil any military functions except against aggression of an ex-

* In the very year 1949, when the alleged imminent menace of Soviet aggression was stated to compel the foundation of Nato as a supposed defensive military organisation, Dulles, the arch-inspirer alongside Churchill and Bevin of Nato, was publicly testifying that there was no menace of Soviet aggression and that every government knew it. In an address to the Third National Conference on 'Churches and the World Order' on March 8, 1949, Dulles said: 'So far as it is humanly possible to judge, the Soviet Government, in the conditions now prevailing, does not contemplate the use of war as an instrument of its national policy. I do not know any responsible high official, military or civilian, in this government or any government who believes that the Soviet state now plans conquest by open military aggression'.

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enemy power, that is, Germany or Japan, or a coalition including an ex-enemy power (thus rendering the Warsaw Pact legal within the Charter of the United Nations, but Nato an illegal violation of the Charter of the United Nations). The claim to represent an organisation solely 'for defence', and not an anti-Soviet bloc, was exposed when, on this explanation being offered in reply to Soviet criticism, the Soviet Union in 1954 and again in 1955 applied to join it, and was each time refused. The claim to represent an organisation for the defence of 'democracy' was glaringly contradicted by the fact that the constituent Nato powers were the colonialist powers engaged in ceaseless colonialist aggressions and wars against the national liberation struggles of the peoples all over the world. And finally the claim to represent an organisation for the 'defence of peace' has received the comment of the historical outcome during these seventeen years, when it has been precisely the Nato powers which have been engaged in the most formidable series of wars since the second world war, while the statesmen of the Nato powers have publicly complained that communism has extended in the world during this period without a single Soviet soldier having to fight to extend it.

A Changed World

The world today is no longer the world of 1949. It was only in 1949, the year of the foundation of Nato, that the final victory of the Chinese People's Revolution brought the range of socialism to reach to one-third of the world. In 1949 the United States was still engaged in the last phase of its effort to strangle the Chinese revolution with the expenditure of six billion dollars and the supply of arms to Chiang Kai Shek. There was still to come the long war of U.S. imperialism and its satellites in Korea, ending in defeat of the attempts to make Korea the base for the destruction of the Chinese revolution and failure to destroy the Korean People's Republic. There followed the defeat of British and French imperialism in the Suez war. In 1949 the Soviet Union was only just breaking the Western nuclear monopoly. By 1953 the Soviet Union was ahead. By 1957 the Sputnik had demonstrated that leadership to all mankind. The balance of the world has changed. The dreams of nuclear supremacy are over. The dreams of crushing socialism, which found original expression in the wars of intervention, and then in building up the Nazi war machine, and then in the foundation of Nato, are now exploded. Only the most reckless in the imperialist camp (the 'better dead than Red' school) still speculate on the gamble of a

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world nuclear war. It is time to draw the conclusions from the new world situation. It is time to wind up Nato.

France Opens the Way

It is ironical that France under De Gaulle should be the first to respond to the new situation and take a bold initiative towards throwing off the shackles of Nato, while Britain under a Labour Government should appear as the ultra-conservative power concerned to preserve and strengthen Nato in union with the West German and American militarists. But the new moves in French policy should not be in fact so surprising. The recent presidential elections, alongside many other signs, have revealed the advance of the democratic progressive forces in France, even within the limiting conditions of the personal regime of De Gaulle, and the first tentative steps towards socialist-communist and popular co-operation which could transform the future in France. Further, De Gaulle, while brought to power by the anti-democratic reactionary forces in France, has by no means identified his traditional national conception of French interests (as the break in 1940 revealed) with theirs. Brought to power by the virtual mutiny of the OAS extremists, who were bent on defeating Algerian independence, he proved the only French statesman who both understood the necessity and was capable of carrying through the independence of Algeria, where the previous parliamentary leaders had failed. Brought to power by the support of his old enemies of the Vichy camp, the representatives of the close union of French big monopolies with the German big monopolies, De Gaulle has by no means shown himself ready to accept the subordination of France to the superior economic and military strength of the giant German partner. He gave notice of this already when he proclaimed his recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier (British official utterance still shamefully refuses to make this recognition), thereby repudiating the West German expansionist aims.

A Quit Notice to Nato

This year France under De Gaulle has carried further this innovating role to respond to the new situation in Europe. De Gaulle has officially called for the expulsion of all American occupying troops and bases from France; the removal of the Nato headquarters, dominated in practice by Hitlerite or neo-Nazi and American officers, from France; and has announced the withdrawal of French armed forces from the joint Nato command, which is also heavily dominated by the neo-Nazis and their American partners.

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Indignantly a correspondent of the American jingo magazine *Time* writes under the heading 'Those Who Sleep' (May 6, 1966):

> In announcing the expulsion of American installations and personnel from France, De Gaulle did not specify whether or not the expulsion order included the service personnel who lie sleeping in the French soil that in two world wars they gave their lives to save.

The *Time* correspondent has forgotten a little difference. The American soldiers who died in France during two world wars were fighting German militarism, not its allies. The notice to Nato is in fact only part of a wider policy. Carrying forward the older French nationalist tradition, before France became the Munich tool of Britain or the Vichy tool of the German monopolies, De Gaulle has recognised that to counterbalance the danger of the superior economic and military strength of the present expansionist West German successor to the Hitlerite state, it is essential for France to build closer relations with the states of Eastern Europe. Simultaneously with his quit notice to Nato, De Gaulle prepares his visit to Moscow, with some prospect of more fruitful results than Wilson's negative journey. It is too early to judge the further outcome of these developments. Every pressure will be exerted upon France. But certainly these initiatives have opened out some positive possibilities for the future of Europe and of peace.

Must Britain be the Dustbin?

But why should Britain be the dustbin for all the refuse and relics of the evil cold war era? When France proposes to expel all the occupying American troops and bases (which we should have done in Britain long ago), Britain rushes forward to make clear that of course they can all be installed in Britain as a further addition to all the existing bases and occupying troops already littering Britain. When even Franco Spain, after the Palomares experience, bans any further American nuclear overflights over Spanish soil as a menace, Britain hastens to announce that of course the American day-and-night nuclear overflights of bombers armed with nuclear bombs can continue over Britain. When West Germany finds its 96,000 square miles of territory insufficient, because of urgent productive needs, for the exercises of its half million army, of course the United Kingdom, with its 93,000 square miles, has plenty of territory to spare for the training of West German troops, including exercises in the operation of nuclear weapons. Let the Italian Bersaglieri, once the favourite troops of Mussolini, come to Britain for their training exercises.

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Let them all come. After all, Britain welcomes all immigrants—provided they do not come from the Commonwealth. William Pitt the Elder said during the American War of Independence:

> If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, and foreign troops were landed in my country, I would never lay down my arms—never, never, never.

But Wilson is no Pitt.

United States at the Crossroads

But is the United States so certain to hang on indefinitely to maintain the bankrupt Nato outfit? Already the United States has in fact withdrawn 15,000 of its top-level combat troops from Europe for its war in Vietnam. At first the withdrawal was announced to be only temporary. Now it has been stated that this withdrawal will be permanent, and that more may follow. Defence Secretary McNamara may try to beat the big drum and proclaim that the infinite resources and man-power of the United States can maintain armies of occupation and conduct wars, even additional wars, all over the world without strain. But he knows that he is shouting in the night to keep up the spirits of his followers, and that even the existing draft is giving rise to mounting unrest among the people, let alone the further increased requirements which are being prepared. With all the concentration on their aggressive expansionist aims in Eastern Asia, the U.S. rulers are today less interested in Europe—all the more since Western Europe is ceasing to be (apart from Britain) the begging parasite client, alms bowl in hand, and obsequious satellite, and has begun, with the uneven development of capitalism, to challenge the primacy of the United States.

Shifting Balance of the USA and West Europe

In 1948 the gold reserve of the United States was six times that of Western Europe (24 billion dollars to 4 billion). By 1964 the gold reserve of Western Europe was larger than that of the United States (18 billion to 15 billion). In 1948 the U.S. share of export trade to the capitalist world was 33 per cent against 28 per cent for Western Europe. By 1964 the proportions were 47 per cent for Western Europe and 18 per cent for the United States. U.S. withdrawal from Western Europe is not yet on the cards; but it has begun to loom on the horizon as a political issue. The Republicans have always been quick to exploit popular feeling in order to denounce the Democrats as the 'war party'. They succeeded in this in the nineteen-twenties. They succeeded again with Eisenhower's pledge to end Truman's war in Korea. Political changes can happen fast in the United States.

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The prospect of a possible American military withdrawal from Western Europe is already alarming the West German militarists.

Whither Germany?

Even in Germany the first signs, however small, of winds of change are making themselves felt. West Germany is still controlled by the heirs of Hitler, the adapted ex-Nazis, the militarists with the openly proclaimed expansionist aims, and the selfsame giant monopolies, the Thyssens, Krupps, I.G. Farben and the rest, which financed and built up Hitler, placed him in power, constructed the concentration camps and gas ovens, exploited slave labour to death, and now back the Bonn regime. The Communist Party is still banned as under Hitler; propaganda for peace is still a crime. Anyone who wishes to know the truth of the picture of West Germany today should study D. N. Pritt's new booklet. 'Neo-Nazis: The Danger of War', just published by this journal, and making available material from the latest Brown Book. But even here new stirrings have begun to make themselves felt. These have been highlighted by the interchanges of Brandt and the leadership of the Socialist Unity Party to consider the organisation of joint public meetings addressed by leaders of both sides in both parts of Germany. It is true that an ironic and revealing difficulty has arisen to block this move for closer understanding. While there would be no difficulty in arranging for Brandt to speak freely at a public meeting in the German Democratic Republic, the Public Prosecutor of the German Federal Republic has made clear that, if Ulbricht were to come to speak at a public meeting anywhere in West German territory, he would be immediately arrested as a Communist. The outcome of the negotiations is still uncertain. But the fact of the negotiations is a symptom.

For German Democratic Co-operation

The truth is that the bankruptcy of the Adenauer policy of the division of Germany for the sake of Nato is beginning to become manifest to wide sections of German opinion. From the outset after the second world war the Soviet Union pressed for the fulfilment of the agreed Potsdam decisions for the establishment of a united democratic disarmed Germany, which should not be linked with any military coalition. The Western powers refused, and established the West German state. At the twelfth hour, on the eve of the fateful decision to rearm West Germany as a member of Nato, the Soviet Union sent a final Note proposing free democratic elections under international supervision over the whole of Germany to establish a

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united democratic disarmed Germany; the Note warned that, if this were refused, if a rearmed West Germany were established as a member of Nato, the road would thereby be barred to German reunification. The Western Powers, and the West German reactionary leaders, the militarists, Adenauer and also the then Social Democratic leaders, chose the division of Germany for the sake of rearmament and Nato. This policy was a gamble on the calculation that a powerful rearmed West Germany, backed by the Western powers, would rapidly conquer the much weaker remainder of Germany and annex the other coveted territories from Poland and Czechoslovakia to restore Hitler's Germany of 1937, and that the Soviet Union would never risk a general war to prevent this. The bankruptcy of this gamble is now becoming manifest to all but the most reckless leaders in West Germany. Not only among the Social Democrats, but from the side of Dr. Dehler and the Free Democrats, and within Chancellor Erhard's party, voices are making themselves heard to end the senseless boycott of the German Democratic Republic and enter on the path of peaceful improvement of relations. Such a path would be equally in the interests of the German people and of the future of Europe. Nato is the enemy of German unity.

Britain and Europe

This is the new and rapidly changing situation, both within Europe and in the whole field of international relations, in which Britain has to take the most fateful decisions for the future. Must Britain always be the bastion of counter-revolution, as in the wars against the French Revolution, or in the wars against the Russian Revolution, or in the building up and maintenance of Nato? This is the policy which Mr. Wilson and Mr. Stewart represent. They are clinging to what dies instead of opening up to the future. Alike over Vietnam, over Nato, in their alignment with the Bonn militarists and the Pentagon against every progressive move from France or other countries, they are placing themselves on the side of reaction, at the cost of the true interests of Britain and the British people. Does this correspond to the real wishes of the labour movement? There is no interest for Britain in maintaining the huge army of occupation in West Germany, at heavy cost to the balance of payments. There is no interest for Britain in constituting the main American nuclear base and target for future war. Britain can play a responsible role for the peaceful future of Europe and the world; for the replacement of Nato and the Warsaw Pact by a European Mutual Security Treaty; for the withdrawal of all troops of occupation from every

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European country; for European friendship and co-operation, East and West. 'Europe' does not mean just six states of the thirty-six states of Europe, nor even only thirteen by adding EFTA. Europe means all Europe, historic Europe, Europe East and West. Towards the fulfilment of this aim Britain can play today a decisive role. But the fulfilment of this role requires liberation from the bonds of Nato.

A Postscript on the Balance of Payments

Last month, in the Notes which went to Press on April 18, we called attention to the peculiar method adopted by the Government this year for publishing the statistics of the balance of payments for 1965. Normally this statistical return is published during March each year. On March 31, General Election day, with a great fanfare of trumpets was published, in an official report entitled 'Economic Report for 1965', the usual table for the balance of payments during 1965, and for visible trade, but omitting the essential accompanying tables for government overseas expenditure, overseas military expenditure or income from overseas investments. Normally this full set of tables has been published during the month of March each year. No indication was given to the unwary student of the March 31 publication that the full tables were being delayed this year. Three weeks later, on April 20 the regular full set of tables 'Preliminary Estimates on National Income and Balance of Payments' was duly published. This device of dividing publication into two halves at different dates achieved its purpose. The entire press on March 31 blazoned the triumphant halving of the deficit on the balance of payments, without noticing the omission of the key tables for judging the true position. When the full tables were published on April 20, the entire press was occupied with the information about the National Income, and paid no further attention to the balance of payments. Thus for the average member of the public, dependent on the press for his information, no hint was given of the key role of government overseas expenditure, mainly military, in the deficit, which he was given to understand was entirely due to the lack of sufficient effort of John Smith, worker, to increase output and exports. Incidentally the new tables now belatedly published (probably available already in March, but held up) give interesting further items, such as the odd coincidence that Government net overseas expenditure in 1965 amounted to £454 million and net overseas investment income also amounted to £454 million. Total 'property income from abroad' amounted to £1,511 million gross, or £789

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million net. That this new device of dividing the dates of publication of the statistics of the balance of payments, so that the most essential information should be entirely withheld from the general press reader, and only available to the diligent student of official documents, was deliberate, is indicated by the fact that, when a zealous reader of our journal wrote to the Stationery Office on the matter, he was informed that the prior publication of one section of the tables on March 31 was to be regarded as 'a press release'. Precisely.

R.P.D.

THE STATE STEPS IN

R. Page Arnot

IT was fifty years ago—or rather in the twelvemonth that ended fifty years ago—that the remark was made which now keeps coming up in my mind. It was Beatrice Webb who made it. Coming in one morning to the Fabian Research Department, she greeted us, William Mellor and myself, and said 'Wages both of men and women are now rising rapidly. Do you realise that this has happened only twice in the whole of English History?' We had not realised it, but we took it from her as the historian of three centuries and more of the Poor Law. 'Yes, only twice! and each time the state has stepped in to keep wages down. Once with the Statute of Labourers in 1348 after the Black Death: and now with Mr. Lloyd George's Munitions of War Act.'

Ten years later there was a different situation in British economy: but the prescription put forward was similar. It was 'to keep wages down'. Stanley Baldwin was Prime Minister while Winston Churchill was Chancellor of the Exchequer. In his Budget Churchill was concerned with the Foreign Exchanges, the balance of payments, exports and imports, etc., just as Jim Callaghan is today. The Budget, described as 'bold' and 'original', was given a warm welcome in the City. But three months had not gone by when Prime Minister Baldwin, stressing 'the needs of the country', was reported to have uttered a famous remark:

> All the workers of this country have got to take reductions in wages to help put industry on its feet. (Thursday, July 30, 1925.)

Today, forty or fifty years later, all seems different—a new generation, a new government, a new Europe, a new kind of crisis. But one thing

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does not alter—the government outlook on wages. The prescription remains the same: the State steps in to keep wages down.

The conclusion to be drawn from these four instances would seem, at first sight, to be inescapable and might be put as follows: Whenever, in a free society, the free worker asks, and gets, more for what he does than suits 'the needs of the country', then the State steps in to keep down wages. Incidentally, the action of the State is an infringement upon freedom of contract: yet Freedom of Contract, together with the Rule of Law, is usually acclaimed as the very essence of a free society.

A conclusion such as this, however valid, and indeed whether valid or not, has a very abstract air about it: and most adults, except the youngest, tend to prefer a less abstract kind of reasoning. They like a more homely form of argument. Let us see whether the same, or another, conclusion would arise from a closer examination of the circumstances, at any rate in these more recent cases. After all, the maxim that safeguards rulers against observance of precedents leading them into follies is that 'Circumstances alter cases'. Let us see, then, what were the arguments used in each particular case. This, as it turns out, is of more than historic interest.

For the difficulty which confronts the present Prime Minister, for whose party so many wage earners voted, is precisely this, that he must find arguments more convincing than those of his predecessors. Nobody outside the ranks of medieval historians would bother about what arguments were used 600 years ago when the Black Death killed multitudes and the price of labour rose rapidly as the demand for it went far beyond the supply. But in 1915/16 and again in 1925/26, without being exactly parallel, things were not so very different. In each case the trade union representatives were asked to give up trade union practices ('The Rule Book') and wage claims—or else face the responsibility of bringing ruin upon themselves and everyone else.

What sort of argument did Lloyd George develop when (as a result of pressure from the engineering and shipbuilding employers) he had in mid-March 1915 summoned the Treasury Conference where the trade union representatives had been requested to stand and deliver—to suspend trade union practices for the duration of the war and on wage claims to accept compulsion? Apart from putting forcefully and vividly 'the needs of the country', Lloyd George by the autumn had thought out something more attractive, more seductive. He appeared before the Trades Union Congress in

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the first week of September 1915 with brand-new arguments. He flattered the delegates with a speech full of wit, humour, sarcasm, earnestness, and appeal to their better feelings and ideals. He fascinated his audience by saying that his measures under the new Munitions of War Act had brought Socialism nearer, had taken a step to Socialism more than had been done in a generation: and the trade union representatives cheered him to the echo. (I was there in the Colston Hall in Bristol and heard him speak. Yes, I heard that silvery voice, that voice of quick silver.)

On the other hand, ten years later, Stanley Baldwin the Tory Prime Minister whose indolence permitted him only the exercise of a kind of low cunning, appeared before the trade union leaders as a plain, blunt, honest man with his claim 'You can trust me!'. But his arguments, a variation on 'the needs of the country', scarcely veiled the needs of the capitalist class of which he was a prominent member. At times Baldwin even seemed to touch the threadbare argument that it was the rich who provide employment for the poor, like the stupid devil in *Penguin Island* who argued against taxing the rich on the ground that 'without the rich the poor would not be able to live'. Not surprisingly, he failed to win the trade union leaders over. So finally what Lloyd George had held in reserve as long as possible, the coercive powers of the State, were brought into play. The General Strike of May 1926, the proclamations under the Emergency Powers Act and the thousands of arrests of leaders followed.

So much for the Liberal arguments and the Tory arguments of forty and fifty years ago to persuade trade union leaders to succumb and to allow the State to step in to keep wages down.

Today, once more, when the State steps in to keep wages down, the problem for those in authority is to find better arguments for it, so to win over the trade union representatives—who were elected for the opposite purpose, namely, to keep wages up. Taking a leaf out of Lloyd George's book, Harold Wilson hastens to one trade union conference after another to put the case for his policy.

Here, it might be thought, was an opportunity, after half a century, for someone so highly educated as the present Prime Minister to put Lloyd George in the shade by equating the proposals, not with a single step, but with many more steps towards socialism. Not so. Wilson, deeply versed in history, knows well enough that State intervention to keep wages down can only be equated with steps to socialism when the economy of the society is no longer dominated by finance-capital. To take a modern example (not available to

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Lloyd George in 1915) it was only possible for the Soviets to carry through their *Pyatiletka*, their first Five-Year Plan, with State restriction of all personal incomes and to claim it, correctly enough, as a step towards socialism, when capitalism no longer dominated, or indeed played any effective part, in the economy of Russia. But without that pre-condition, the plan to keep wages down is bound to encounter a suspicion that the 'needs of the country' can be called by another name.

So anyone who was so simple as to imagine that Harold Wilson would produce a socialist argument or would seek to demonstrate that his plan can have a socialist label stuck on to it in order to pass the scrutiny of his own back benchers was bound to be disappointed. Harold Wilson, one of the cleverest Prime Ministers of the century, knows a trick worth two of that. He never pretends that what he is proposing is relevant to socialism. He does not mouth socialist phrases (and does not need to, as he is perfectly secure in the knowledge that the infatuated 'back benchers' within the national and local labour parties will fervently believe in him as a Bevanite).

Where Lloyd George, the Liberal, sought popularity by claiming that his Ministry of Munitions brought 'steps to socialism', Wilson makes no such pretence. He speaks in terms of technology and modernity, of the greater efficiency and of scientific management. Harold Wilson holds aloft the banner of the ideal in this technological sense. But when you turn round the banner you see on its seamy side something else, namely: the paramount importance of more production at less cost to get more exports at cheaper prices through keeping wages down, to pay for more arms and more military expenditure east of Suez.

All this he does with a moral fervour imported to the manuscripts from which he reads with more aplomb than most orators.

The key policy remains that the State should keep wages down, as it was in the time of the Tories, as it was when Lloyd George was 'robbing the hen roosts'. But Wilson does it ruefully claiming that he puts forward unpopular policies. He has followed Ophelia's advice to Gertrude 'Oh, you must wear your rue with a difference'.

Of course it can be argued that what at first seemed an unfortunate coincidence on these three occasions in a half century was actually bound to happen. It could be said that at most periods since 1867 there has always been a great similarity of party standpoints; that in such things as foreign affairs, war and peace, public order, etc., there has to be a continuity of policy from one administration to

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another ('the Queen's government must be carried on'); and that this applies to economic problems as well, including the crucial recurrent problem of the balance of payments and the Pound Sterling.

This however is not the way the Prime Minister puts the argument, for the simple reason that this would pre-suppose that the existing system has always to be maintained, and that arguments about socialism or socialist policies are only to be conducted when the weather is set fair: whereas in every shift of weather, fair or foul, Wilson in his recent form avoids all and every argument that smacks of the doctrinaire. He leaves talk of 'free world' and of 'free society' to his lieutenants and his opponents in parliament. Wilson keeps to homely exhortations and practicality in all measures.

This campaign, this fervour of exhortation and practicality has now been redoubled since the General Election. It has become a 'Crusade', not to recover the Holy Cross from the Saracens, but to rescue the Pound Sterling and all it stands for from the era of 'Grab'. Dire prophecies are uttered, if the unions do not yield, and a number of elected trade union officials have been suitably impressed by them. Dire prophecies were uttered sixty-three years ago by Joseph Chamberlain that if his programme of Tariff Reform were not adopted trade and prosperity would vanish from Britain: but his prophecies proved false. The old mineowners used to 'prove' with formidable-sounding arguments and much statistical lore that the Miners' Eight Hours Act would deal industry a blow from which it would never recover. But the blow never fell.

These blood-curdling prophecies of what will happen if . . . and if . . . and if, have been the stock-in-trade of generations, of every politician pushing through a policy which he knows (and, indeed, in Wilson's case, claims) to be unpopular. What is new is not the Prime Minister's prophetic powers, but that hard-headed trade union representatives should in several cases fall for them in such full measure.

Enough has been said to show that the presuppositions behind the arguments of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet are the significant features of this 'Crusade' controversy. These are presuppositions to which no Socialist need pay the slightest attention. Any member of the Labour Party who has had preliminary qualms about opposing his Prime Minister (in whom normally are enshrined the hopes of Socialism) can, on this particular matter and with a good Socialist conscience, turn all his energy into defeating propositions which will certainly be to the advantage of the big monopolies and to the no less certain disadvantage of the working class.

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VIETNAM: CHALLENGE TO US ALL

D. N. Pritt

THE United States is at present carrying on a long and barbarous war in Vietnam, against the whole of the North and four-fifths of the South, whilst the remaining fifth of the South, half submits and half protests; it is employing a quarter of a million of its armed forces, and threatens to employ even more. Vietnam is many thousands of miles from America, and the war presents the most serious threat to world peace; it is time to take stock of the situation and set out the facts, for the origins of the already long-drawn-out war have been obscured by unscrupulous lying.

So, what is Vietnam? Why is the USA making war there? What justifications does it offer for doing so, and what substance is there in them? And what have we in Britain to do about it?

Vietnam is one country, not two; long coveted by imperialists—French, Japanese and American—for its rubber, mineral and other wealth, it has always shown an infinite capacity for resisting foreign occupants. When it last decisively defeated such occupants, the French, in 1954, accords were reached at the Geneva Conference to secure its independent, unified, and peaceful future as a sovereign state. At the time, different parts of the country were controlled by two separate governments. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam, established in 1945, immediately after the Japanese were driven out, as the government of the whole country under its President, Ho Chi Minh, ruled the whole of the North and a large part of the South; the remainder was still occupied by French troops, who had set up a 'State of Vietnam' headed by the 'night-club emperor' Bao Dai, a former puppet king of Annam under both the French and the Japanese; he was later supported by the U.S. and British governments. Geneva had thus to provide both for the future government of all Vietnam and for its immediate administration; and this was done pretty well. The accords provided that the future government of Vietnam should be determined by a general election 'which will bring about the reunification of Vietnam', to be held in 1956. Meanwhile, for administrative purposes, the accords provided for the setting up at the 17th parallel of a 'military demarcation line', which was expressly stated to be 'provisional, and (should) not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary'.

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The USA, which had done its best to prevent agreement being reached at Geneva, did not actually sign the accords, but it nevertheless committed itself fully to them by a declaration, made at the time (on July 21, 1954) in which it 'took note' of them and undertook to refrain from the threat or use of force to disturb them, in accordance with Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, which lays down that 'all members shall refrain in their international relations from the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations'. It added that 'it (would) continue to seek to achieve unity through elections supervised by the United Nations to insure that they are conducted fairly', and that 'it (would) not join in any arrangements which (would) hinder the determination by the Vietnamese people of their own future'.

There was no question of permanent division of Vietnam into two states, and when President Johnson asserted on August 12, 1964, that the accords 'guaranteed the independence of *South* Vietnam', he was stating the exact opposite of the truth.

The elections could perfectly well have been held in 1956 as agreed, and both the International Control Commission set up under the accords and the United Nations announced their readiness to supervise them. Had they been held, Vietnam would have had every chance of reunification as one independent peaceful and prosperous state; but the USA did not want this. Under their directions, the puppet Bao Dai government made the holding of the elections impossible by refusing to take any part in them, on the pretext that the participation of North Vietnam would render them 'not free'. There are many definitions of freedom in the vocabulary of imperialists, and this time 'not free' meant that the result of the elections was not likely to favour the American book. President Eisenhower in his memoirs made it perfectly clear:

> I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indo-Chinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held at the time of the fighting (*i.e., in 1954—DNP*) possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader rather than Chief of State Bao Dai.

Next let me consider the justifications advanced by the USA for this war. Apart from demagogic mouthings about 'protecting freedom' and 'containing Communism', the justifications mainly take the form of attempts to bring the war within one or other of the very limited exceptions made in the UN Charter to the broad prohibition laid down in Article 2(4) quoted above, which plainly forbids this war.

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The U.S. appeals first to Article 51 of the Charter, which preserves 'the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against *a member of the United Nations*'. One insuperable difficulty for the USA here is that South Vietnam is not a member of the United Nations; if it were, any U.S. claim to be exercising the right of self-defence under the Article would be that 'individual self-defence' does not arise since Vietnam has not attacked the USA, and 'collective self-defence' is available under the Charter only for regional collective systems; the USA can hardly claim to be part of a South-East Asian region. There may be other difficulties to be overcome in any attempt to invoke Article 51, but these are surely enough.

The only other exception to the prohibition of Article 2(4) is to be found in Article 53, which is wider than Article 51; but the action which it permits cannot be carried out by any state or regional agency without the authorisation of the Security Council, which has not been given.

Article 39 gives the United Nations the right to intervene in civil strife, whenever that strife threatens international peace; in international law, the true status of affairs in Vietnam is probably one of civil strife, but the right to intervene rests in the UN alone and cannot be used by states.

The UN Charter gives no justification for the argument, also advanced by the USA, that North Vietnam is guilty of aggression against South Vietnam by sending troops to aid the four-fifths of South Vietnam which is resisting the USA and the puppet government. It is almost worthy of Goebbels that those who are themselves aggressors should seek to label as aggression the aid given by one part of the country to another part of it when the USA has pledged itself to observe and indeed further the reunification of the whole country. The importance of this argument is that it is used to justify the barbarous and intensive bombing of North Vietnam; but it is as baseless as the other attempted justifications; the UN Charter makes no provisions for 'world gendarmes'.

The USA seeks also to assert that Seato (the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation, consisting mainly of countries that are not in South-East Asia) gives it some right to intervene; but that Treaty provides expressly that it is not to 'affect the rights and obligations of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security'.

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Thus, the USA has no justifications for its actions in Vietnam, and I can turn to study its real motives. These are, plainly, to be found in its obsessive desire to encircle the Socialist world, and particularly China, with a ring of hostile bases, in its panic fear that any extension of Communist influence or government anywhere may hasten the, in any case, inevitable end of capitalism, and in its hope to exploit for profit the great resources of the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

The problems raised by this barbarous war are terrible, not only for the Vietnamese and the American peoples, but for Britain too. The President and government of the USA have a tiger by its tail; they have no hope of victory, but fear that withdrawal will not only bring great loss of prestige but will also increase Communist influence everywhere; at the same time, if they continue, they waste colossal resources, incur the hatred of almost the whole world, and risk a third world war. Meanwhile, inside their own country, they have to cope with growing resistance from their own people, who have some moral sense, do not like war, and like still less sending their own husbands and children to die in Vietnam. And the Democratic President and his Party must be painfully aware that the one sure way to return the Republicans to power is for the Democrats to conduct a war.

For the people of Britain, the problems and the responsibilities are almost equally serious. Whilst the two main parties agree in their support of the American government—and said as little about it as they possibly could in the recent general election—a large part of the population condemns the policy and the British government's support of it, and detests in particular the idea of British troops being sent in to take part in it. The politicians, on the other hand, are tied to the USA by debt, and probably also by some secret bargain for U.S. support against Indonesia in return for their support of the U.S. in Vietnam—part of the price to be paid for the policy of 'strong East of Suez'. It is a thoroughly disreputable dilemma for our politicians, and at the same time an opportunity and a challenge for the forces of progress, including the Left Wing of the Labour Party. If, inside Parliament and outside, in harmony with the ever broader and ever braver movement of opposition in the best elements of the American people, we can create a united and consistent opposition of the whole left strong enough to compel our government to change its policy, we shall render a great service to the cause of peace, to the morale and prestige of the British people.

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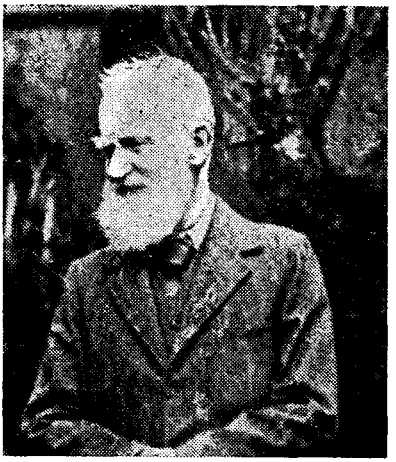
BERNARD SHAW on

'THE DENSHAWAI



Denshawai is a little Egyptian village in the Nile delta. Besides the dilapidated huts among the reeds by the roadside, and the palm trees, there are towers of unbaked brick, as unaccountable to an English villager as a Kentish oast-house to an Egyptian. These towers are pigeon houses; for the villagers keep pigeons just as the English farmer keeps poultry . . . A party of English officers went pigeon-shooting there the year before last. The inhabitants complained and memorialised; but they obtained no redress . . .

So one leading family of pigeon farmers, Mahfouz by name, despaired of the law; and its head, Hassan Mahfouz, aged 60, made up his mind not to submit tamely to a repetition of the outrage. . . . Fancy the feelings of Denshawai when on June 13 last there drove to the village four khaki-clad British officers with guns, one of them being a shooter of the year before . . . They went to 100 to 300 yards away from the houses and began shooting the villagers' pigeons. The villagers remonstrated and finally seized the gun of the youngest officer. It went off in the struggle and wounded three men and the wife of one Abd-el-Nebi, a young man of 25 . . . Abd-el-Nebi hit the supposed murderer of his wife with a stick; Hassan Mahfouz used a stick also; and the lads and loafers began to throw stones and bricks . . . No English mob, under similar provocation, would have behaved any better; and few would have done as little mischief . . . The officers had given outrageous provocation; they should have been severely reprimanded and informed that they had themselves to thank for what happened to them; and the villagers who assaulted them should have been treated with leniency . . . That is what should have ensued. Now for what actually did ensue.

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HORROR' OF JUNE, 1906

Abd-el-Nebi, in consideration of the injury to his wife, was only sentenced to penal servitude for life . . . And lest Abd-el-Nebi should feel lonely at 25 in beginning penal servitude for the rest of his days, another young man, of 20, was sent to penal servitude for life with him . . . No such sentimentality was shown to Hassan Mahfouz. An Egyptian pigeon farmer who objects to British sport . . . is clearly a ruffian to be made an example of. Penal servitude was not enough for a man of 60 who looked 70, and might not have lived to suffer five years of it. So Hassan was hanged; but as a special mark of consideration for his family, he was hanged in full view of his own house, with his wives and children and grandchildren enjoying the spectacle from the roof. And lest this privilege should excite jealousy in other households, three other Denshavians were hanged with him . . . Hanging however, is the least sensational form of public execution: it lacks those elements of blood and torture for which the military and bureaucratic imagination lusts. So . . . they kept the entertainment going by flogging eight men with fifty lashes each . . .

It is unspeakably reassuring to learn from the British official reports laid before Parliament that 'due dignity was observed in carrying out the executions' that 'all possible humanity was shown in carrying them out' and that 'the arrangements were admirable, and reflect great credit on all concerned' . . . Lord Cromer certifies that these proceedings were 'just and necessary' . . . I have extracted enough to paint the picture, and enforce my warning to England that if her Empire means ruling the world as Denshawai has been ruled in 1906—and that, I am afraid, is what the Empire does mean to the main body of our aristocratic-military caste and to our Jingo plutocrats—then there can be no more sacred and urgent political duty on earth than the disruption, defeat and suppression of the Empire . . . In any case let no Englishman who is content to leave Abd-el-Nebi and his twenty-year-old neighbour in penal servitude for life, and to plume himself on the power to do it, pretend to be fit to govern either my country or his own.

(From Shaw's Preface to 'John Bull's Other Island')

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IMMIGRANTS AT WORK

Dipak Nandy *

'THE immigrants are healthy, law-abiding and are at work. Why then do the Government want to keep them out?': thus the late Hugh Gaitskell, during the debate on the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill in 1961. That question still awaits a satisfactory answer. But alone among the advocates of immigration control Mr. Maurice Edelman, Labour member for Coventry North, argued that it is the employment position of immigrant (i.e. coloured) workers which justifies stricter controls. In an article entitled 'Full Stop!' in the *Daily Express* of March 30, 1965, Mr. Edelman spelt out his case:

> The coloured roadsweeper, the coloured dustman, the coloured sewer-man, and the coloured furnace-man are a ready-made solution for those who want to know who will do the dirty jobs in the age of automation. . . . At the other end of the scale there is, of course, a demand for highly skilled scientists, technologists, and engineers. . . . Among all the Commonwealth immigrants who have come to Britain less than two per cent—if one excludes doctors—have such qualifications. . . . there is no doubt that in the last 10 years the shape of a depressed coloured class engaged for the most part in menial activities is slowly emerging. . . . The danger has steadily grown of a new two-nation system where despite the good will of the British people as a whole, white and black are as separated by their jobs and living conditions as they are by their colour.

Two questions have to be asked. First, is this a true, or even partially true, picture of the present situation? Secondly, if it is, what are the causes that have produced it?

Now, facts are notoriously scarce in the field of race relations, but they are not so scarce that they need to be invented. If we turn to the 1961 Census figures, we find that the 'highly skilled scientists, technologists, and engineers' (minus the doctors) constituted *not 2 per cent but 10.4 per cent* of the immigrant community. Clearly Mr. Edelman either imagines or invents his 'facts'. Mrs. Ruth Glass, commenting on the Census figures, wrote:

> Though immigrants were then (in 1961) 'over-represented' in some industries, such as transport, these concentrations were not as marked as might be thought, nor did they occur only in the low status groups. . . . The social class distribution of coloured immigrants was thus not sharply distinct from that of the total labour force in 1961. (*The Times*, June 30, 1965.)

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Of course there are problems, and some of these problems arise from the nature of the immigrant workforce. The great contribution of immigrant labour has not only been to plug the manpower gap which has characterised the economy since 1945. Almost as important has been the fact that the immigrant worker has been significantly more mobile than the English worker. As the centre for urban studies noted in its submission to the Milner Holland Committee:

> It is just these people on the move from places near and far who are required to meet local labour shortages in service and other industries . . . They keep the metropolitan machine running.

High mobility means that the immigrant is not likely to strike roots in any local community; more seriously, he will seldom achieve the residential qualification for council houses. Furthermore, immigrants are more likely to be found in some industries than in others. The highest proportions are to be found in service industries, in clerical positions, professional and technical jobs, in engineering, textiles and transport. There are hardly any coloured workers in the mining industry, few coloured shop assistants, only one coloured policeman, and no coloured bank-clerks.

But these are not problems specific to coloured workers. High mobility and the fact that coloured workers are unduly concentrated in jobs which the local labour force does not want, are characteristics common to *all* immigrant labour, coloured or white. The real problem is whether these familiar differentials harden into a permanent pattern where coloured workers are concerned. Mr. Edelman's picture may well come true one day. If it does, it will be because, contrary to the facts, we insist on thinking of coloured workers as unskilled and unqualified and tolerate them only in certain kinds of work. If we persist, we will ourselves have created the two-nation system Mr. Edelman fears. Coloured immigrants would be moving out of 'black jobs' if they were not being confined to these by a whole interlinking mechanism of discriminatory practices. The most acute problem in the field of employment is *discrimination.*

From the moment the immigrant worker comes on the labour market he is likely to encounter the fact of discrimination. A 'coloured quota', ranging from 10 to 25 per cent, is no longer uncommon in industry now. But even if quotas are not set, immigrant workers may still be singled out and consigned to the night-shift. Certain kinds of jobs are systematically refused to coloured applicants. These are jobs which 'involve contact with the public'. Thus, 1.7 per cent of the coloured immigrants in the 6 major conur-

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bations in 1961 were employed in the processing and preparation of food, as compared with 0.5 per cent employed in food sales. It is apparently all right for coloured workers to handle food during processing, but they cannot be seen handling food behind a counter because the public associates immigrants with disease! What is even more scandalous is the fact that Ministry of Labour Employment Exchanges actively co-operate with firms in discrimination in the hiring of coloured workers. When Mr. Reg Freeson, M.P. for Willesden East, raised the matter in the House of Commons last November, the Minister of Labour, Ray Gunter, replied:

> (Mr. Freeson) viewed with great disfavour the fact that managers of employment exchanges mark employment cards 'C.W.' (for coloured worker). He condemned officials of my Ministry for presuming to put the letters 'C.W.' on cards. But this is the other side of the coin. *They do it from a sense of Christian charity*, because they know that if they send a man to a works he will be humiliated, often not because the management wants to humiliate him but because the management knows that the men on the workshop floor will not accept him. (*Hansard*, Vol. 673, cols. 462-3; my italics.)

No one knows what brand of Christianity the Minister of Labour professes: but seldom can Christian principles have been so debased in the professing.

Racial discrimination is a corrupting thing: the sort of corruption it can breed is highlighted by the account of a trade unionist, Mr. Len Squire of the T & GWU, of what can go on:

> We know of shocking cases of corruption. In the lower strata of administration, there are men who demand bribes from coloured workers. Some labour managers and personnel men take bribes when coloured men come for jobs. £5 or £10 is usually the figure. Even in the factory, the coloured men may have to pay money to the foreman or chargehand to get Sunday working. (*Sunday Times*, April 24, 1966.)

It is scarcely surprising then, against the background of practices such as these, to hear of private arrangements between management and shop stewards that, in the event of redundancy, coloured workers should be dismissed first. Or that coloured workers cannot expect promotion to supervisory grades because of the opposition of the native workers. In April 1964, 80 union members at the English Steel Corporation in Sheffield threatened to strike if a Pakistani crane driver was upgraded to the charge of a machine and successfully barred promotion to the Pakistani. And a recent survey has shown that 83 per cent of those interviewed would object to working under a coloured person (Clifford Hill, *How Colour Prejudiced is Britain?* p. 128).

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Of course this is not the whole picture. There are cases, such as the recent strike at the GEC factory in Coventry where 200 men came out on strike for nearly a week and demanded the removal of a setter-operator who had consistently been involved in racial incidents with coloured workers, which strengthens one's belief in working-class solidarity. But it would be useless to pretend that discrimination is not widespread and dangerous.

If a coloured shop steward can be dismissed with the acquiescence of union officials, then it is not just the coloured workers who suffer. The very principles of trade unionism are bound to be weakened.

Trade unionists give two reasons for their suspicion at the introduction of coloured labour. Both stem from the widespread view that coloured workers have been imported as cheap labour to undercut, or at least to hold down, the wages of English workers. There is the view, in the first place, that coloured workers come from 'backward' countries and therefore are not good unionists. Secondly, that coloured workers mean lower wages, since the availability of coloured labour means that managements do not have to offer better terms in order to recruit native labour. What is really involved here is the failure of the movement to recruit and assist coloured workers as actively as it does white workers. The plain fact is that given the slightest encouragement coloured workers have shown an enthusiasm for organisation and solidarity that could not easily be bettered. The Woolf Rubber factory at Southall, scene of the so-called 'racial strike' in December, 1965, was unionised for the first time in its history when Indian workers took the trouble to do so earlier last year. The night-shift at Walker's Crisps factory in Leicester was unionised for the first time last year—it consisted entirely of Indians. And in both cases, it was the failure of the union to defend the interests of its coloured members which produced the apathy and cynicism that trade unionists complain about. The strike at the Courtauld's Red Scar Mill at Preston in May and June of last year (a perfectly normal industrial dispute which was blown up by union officials and the mass media into a 'racial strike') showed beyond argument that coloured workers could be just as vigilant against increased exploitation and threats to their working conditions as any other group of workers.

I believe that the time has come when the labour movement must consider the positive initiatives that are necessary against racial discrimination and all the social consequences that flow from it. In the first place, trade unions must initiate positive action to encour-

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age coloured workers to join their unions. (I know of one branch of the Woodworkers where a Pakistani has, with the encouragement of the branch officials, become Vice-Chairman of the branch.) The coloured immigrant is first and foremost a worker—that is why he has come to Britain—and it is as a worker that he will integrate into British society. What is more, the movement must ensure that coloured children apply for and get their fair share of industrial training and apprenticeships.

But this is not all. We have now belatedly realised the need for laws against discrimination. The Race Relations Act as it stands is laughably inadequate and is bound to create distrust and scepticism on all sides: the discriminators are not deterred, their victims become disillusioned. A law which does not cover the most crucial areas of discrimination cannot hope to command the confidence of those whom it is designed to help.

The National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, set up by the Government under the White Paper on Immigration, has recently requested the Government to adopt the following amendment to the Fair Wages Resolution of 1946:

> The contractor shall not practise or condone discrimination on the ground of colour, race, religion or ethnic or national origins, in engaging, training, promoting or discharging any persons in his employment, or in fixing any terms or conditions of employment.

It is to be hoped that the amendment will be adopted. Indeed, the Government can do more. By ensuring that Ministry of Labour Employment Exchanges drop their practice of conniving at discrimination in hiring, and furthermore by refusing Government contracts to firms which are known to discriminate, the Government itself can set a standard for society.

The law itself will have to be amended to cover employment. The Race Relations Act must be extended. But it will not be, unless the trade union movement is prepared to join in the demand for such an extension. Now, there are good reasons why unionists should be opposed to legislation. The whole tradition of industrial relations in Britain is characterised by and large by the 'abstention' of the law. Consequently, laws are seen as threats to the right of collective bargaining. But a law against discrimination in employment can pose no such threat: on the contrary, it merely removes a disability which is afflicted on one section of workers. When Cabinet Ministers can remark in private that discrimination in employment cannot be outlawed 'because the trade unions would not have it', it becomes

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the duty of all those who believe in the principles and the ideals of trade unionism to give them the lie.

The trade union movement is one of the few bodies of men in this country which can make a decisive contribution to integration. Trade unionists can make this contribution, not only because of the ideals of the movement, but also because they have themselves suffered from discrimination of other kinds. They must know, above all others, what an insidious, corrupting and degrading evil discrimination can be. Here, in our very midst, are some of those evils which the Trades Union Congress has denounced in South Africa. British trade unionists cannot evade the responsibility for being in the forefront of the fight against racialism in our society.

A COUNCIL OF ACTION—40 YEARS AGO

The period after the General Strike ended, with the capitulation of the Trades Union Congress General Council on May 12, 1926, was one of a continued 'police state'. The locked out miners fought on for another 25 weeks, the longest of any comparative stoppage in history. From month to month Royal Proclamations renewed the State of Emergency and arrests of trade unionists and working class leaders rose rapidly to 4,000—of whom one thousand were members of the Communist Party. Yet, despite the difficulties and dangers during those first weeks of dislocation, *Labour Monthly* appeared in June 1926 as a special General Strike issue.

Last month we gave a brief and partial description of how, on the North-East Coast, the hastily convened General Council made up of elected regional and local trade union officials built up a counter-authority so successfully that the Civil Commissioner, Kingsley Wood, a member of the Government, was compelled to open up negotiations, in which he offered a system of dual control to the strike committees (hushed up in Parliament, where Government spokesmen denied the fact of these negotiations). The type of organisation that enabled this Region to reach such a situation was described in 'A Workers' Council of Action' in the June 1926 *Labour Monthly*. In quoting this now, we are able to divulge certain details omitted then because of the Emergency Powers Act.

In the village of Chopwell on the evening of Saturday May 1, a remarkable document was drawn up; presented on May 2 in the Spen Co-op Store to an extended meeting of the Blaydon Trades and Labour Council including elected representatives of all local working class organisations; unanimously accepted and carried out effectively. At this meeting Will Lawther, executive member of the national Labour Party, took the Chair and Harry Bolton, Chairman of the Urban District Council spoke in the discussion: both Lawther and Bolton were later arrested. R. Page Arnot, just three weeks out of prison, presented the plan of campaign. Also represented there were Co-operative Boards of Management, Women's Co-operative Guilds, Labour Party, Communist Party, Plebs League and Labour and County Councillors.

Thus was the Plan of Campaign drawn up:

Preamble.—No time to be spent tonight on discussion of *purpose* of strike (to aid the miners) or origin or possible ending or national aspect or international

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aspect. Not concerned for next few days with any wider horizons: concerned only with concentrating on our limited objective.

Objective.—To defeat the Civil Commissioner appointed for Northumberland/Durham Region. The Civil Commissioner is appointed by the Government and is armed with the Emergency Powers Act in order to break the strike. Our immediate aim is to prevent him doing that in this town. But in order to do that effectually we must offer a resistance throughout the whole region over which he has been given plenary powers. That is, we must defeat the Civil Commissioner and all his strike-breaking apparatus.

The E.P.A. Apparatus.—The apparatus of a regional Civil Commission comprises:

(1) The arrangements and organisation built up by the Ministry of Health during the last nine months.
(2) The arrangements and special organisation prepared by the Home Office.
(3) The plans and arrangements devised by the War Office, Admiralty and Air Force.
(4) Sundry other arrangements and organisations provided or prepared by Government Departments and placed under his jurisdiction.

That is to say, there will be concentrated against the strikers in the Northumberland/Durham Region the whole of the Civil and Military institutions that are under central control; and also the civil institutions usually classed as Local Government.

With regard to the last of these it remains to be seen whether he would be able to make the full use of them that he would wish.

The Strike-Breakers' Man Power.—The actual bodies of men at the disposal of the Civil Commissioner are:

(1) Local and national Government officials.
(2) The Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies.
(3) Various other strike-breaking bodies, composed mainly of middle-class persons.
(4) The Fascisti, one of whose organisations had entered into an arrangement with the O.M.S.
(5) The Special Constabulary, in which it was likely many of the Fascisti would enrol.
(6) The Special Civil Constabulary, a body of armed men with steel helmets organised solely for the purpose of coping with the strike.
(7) The regular County and Borough Police Forces.
(8) The Army, Navy and the Air Force, equipped with tanks, machine guns, submarines, torpedo boats and aeroplanes.

Working Class Machinery.—To meet all this we must improvise. The improvised machinery must be simple, easy to throw up, all inclusive. All activities in each locality should be centralised in a single body to be called Council of Action, Strike Committee, Trades Council or what you will: all such bodies should be linked up and centralised in the county capital town under a body responsible for the whole region.

Councils of Action.—The first task: tonight's meeting should set up a Council of Action and plan out all the machinery and all the tasks for the locality. The second task is to set up replicas of this Council of Action in every corresponding locality throughout the various counties, so as to make a network of Council of Actions linked up with a central directing body whose authority and scope on our side would exactly answer to the Civil Commissioner.

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The Regional Authority.—The third task is to assemble the district officers of Trade Unions, men who by experience and routine are capable of thinking in terms of the counties as a single whole. In certain unions there will not exist any such divisional officers or regional committee. In such case recourse must be had to other units of the organisation until such time as formal arrangements can be entered into and a formal constitution drawn up. Meantime an assembling of district or divisional officers will in itself constitute a body of sufficient experience and make sufficient pooling of authority to do the work effectively.

Special Newspaper.—Task No. 1 can be solved tonight. The other two tasks, the building of district authority and a network of local bodies must be solved mainly by the printing and scattering broadcast of a special strike newspaper.

Strike Bulletin.—This strike bulletin should appear each day during the strike, but it will have two purposes; it will have one purpose up to the moment the general strike is declared and another purpose thereafter. Its purpose up to the moment of the declaring of the general strike is precisely this—to organise the whole of our counties in Councils of Action and to link up the organisation in a regional authority. It is impossible to send speakers all over the counties or to do anything else than to print this bulletin and spread it by despatch riders. In this way only can the necessary machinery be rapidly improvised.

Tasks of Councils of Action.—The Council of Action will have a number of tasks for which Sub-Committees should be set up. These will include: Communications (Despatch Riders etc.); Feeding Centres; Food and Transport; Co-operative Societies; Local Government; Sports (to serve a double purpose); Defence Corps; Picketing; Permits; Organisation of Women; Publicity: (a) Local Stencils, (b) Other publicity; Information.

Local Government.—The Urban District Councils, etc., are not necessarily to be handed over to the Civil Commission in their entirety. A struggle may take place for the possession of the machinery of such authority as is possessed by Boards of Guardians or Urban District Councils. It may be possible to impede the operations of the Civil Commissioner and his officers under the EPA; perhaps even to transform part at any rate of the Urban District Council into strike machinery.

Food and Transport.—The TUC instructions for the general strike, if and when it should come off, include the provision of Food and Transport and Health Services. Whatever the intention of the General Council in laying down this instruction, it is clear that on this point depends the success of the general strike. Whoever handles and transports food, that same person controls food: whoever controls food will find the 'neutral' part of the population rallying to their side. Who feeds the people wins the strike! The problem of the general strike can be focussed down to one thing—the struggle for food control.

Morale.—All these activities and all this machinery needed for these activities are designed for the purpose of defeating the Civil Commissioner's attempt to break the general strike. But they have another object. That is the building up of our own morale both locally and nationally, and the breaking down of the enemy's morale both locally and nationally. Every officer who reports that picketing has stopped his transport, every military officer who reports that he cannot trust his men to act against the strikers because of effective fraternisation, is a means by which when the report has filtered through to Whitehall the morale of the Chief Civil Commissioner, and thence of the Cabinet, is impaired and weakened.

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A E U National Committee, 1966

A Delegate

THE 48th Meeting of the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union met at Eastbourne during late April and early May. The fact that the Labour Party had just won a convincing victory at the polls was pressed home to the delegates in the President's address. Sir William Carron stated that the electorate had placed the unions on trust by rejecting the 'iron hand' threat on the trade unions by the Tory Party. He called for 100 per cent support so that the Labour Government could overcome the economic difficulties—asking for the Dunkirk spirit of blood, sweat, toil and tears.

This call for restraint and yet higher productivity, followed by an appeal for a truce between men and management of the British Motor Corporation for eighteen months, indicated to delegates what the National Committee 1966 would be about.

The agenda contained more resolutions on the Prices and Incomes policy from the union's twenty-six divisions than on any other subject, but this did not come up for discussion until the fourth day of the committee's deliberations. This was 'engineered' quite simply because the right wing were able to fill the Standing Orders Committee with their nominees. Therefore, timing and choice were used to great advantage.

It was announced that the Prime Minister would attend the National Committee after the debate on Prices and Incomes—so as not to appear to influence the decision. The resolution put was 'opposing legislation to enforce an incomes policy on trade unions. That the unions should be free to bargain collectively on wages and conditions in a capitalist society; free to decide and pursue at all times policies necessary to defend and advance the living standards of the members.' The debate developed into a struggle between the platform and the left wing of the National Committee. Continual interjections from the President and a thirty minute deluge from John Boyd, Executive Committee member, were thrown in to counter the reasoned arguments of the resolution's supporters.

Confusion was apparent amongst the delegates—should their allegiance be to the platform and Government or their divisional decisions? One such delegate managed to speak very well in support of the resolution but wound up his speech by indications that he

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would vote against, reasoning that 'we must support our Government'. The pleas for loyalty and responsibility had their effect, but the resolution was only just defeated by 30 votes to 22. Votes count, and soon Sir William, who can never hide his smile of happy victory was telling the world at large that the policy of the AEU was support for the Government to enforce a wages policy. He did this because this was a resolution defeated, and, generally speaking, it is resolutions carried that become the policy of the union.

Immediately afterwards, a resolution worded 'This NC instructs EC to do everything in their power to stop the introduction of legislation which can have the effect of restricting the power and influence of the trade union movement' was carried by 38 to 14 votes. And minutes later another opposing any legislation aimed at interfering with the rights of the unions at any level to enter collective bargaining freely with the employers, was successfully carried.

Confusion indeed, facing all ways at once—or were some squaring their conscience?

Contested resolutions pledging 100 per cent support for the Labour Government heralded the arrival of Harold Wilson—who will be remembered mainly for his audacity in suggesting that we tear up the Rule Book. When George Brown later attended the union's National Committee Annual Dinner we were treated to another dose of policy and a hint of Fairfield's Consortium. Indeed at this stage we looked like becoming a Labour Party conference, having departed from the usual invitation to one of the AEU MPs.

But when the Fairfield's Consortium, employers', Government and trade unions' investment, was discussed and it was decided to invest £50,000 of union funds, one begins to wonder if we shall see Jo Grimond at the 1967 National Committee. John Boyd was quite definite that this was a new experiment and not only a question of saving jobs. He even talked of workers' control and this being one way of taking over industry. The opposers simply called for nationalisation now.

The National Committee called for Government initiative to bring about a recall of the 14 Nation Conference on Vietnam, also pledging support to UNO in bringing about peace. The right wing successfully defeated an amendment calling for a stop to the bombing by the Americans and the implementation of the 1954 Geneva Agreement which includes the withdrawal of all foreign troops. Progress came at last with a call to the British Government to take all steps to remove the racialist government in Rhodesia, election of

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a government with the right of one man one vote, release of all political prisoners and full democratic rights.

Yes, votes count, and the right wing carried the day, but was it really a victory? So much preparation and 'engineering' had to be done before the National Committee met. It is not now a question of how brilliant or soundly socialist the case put during the debate, it is, more than ever, the question of the type of delegate that reaches the National Committee.

I think the united left did a good job at Eastbourne, and if the lesson is learnt and more work put into the problem, 1967 could see victory for the defence of the union and a more sound social policy adopted.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Trade Union Legislation

(The following letter deals with the very important questions that are arising in the course of the evidence before the Royal Commission on Trade Unions. We believe that the evidence being put deserves most careful attention by trade unionists and we would welcome the opinions of other trade unionists on these questions.—Ed. LM.)

It is my view that many well-intentioned trade union leaders are in danger of falling into the elementary error of calling for legal rights without being aware that, from a legal point of view, rights are invariably accompanied by corresponding duties. If therefore, for example, employers are to be legally obliged to afford recognition, some legal tribunal must ultimately be given authority to adjudicate as to which is the appropriate union to be recognised. In the Fairview Caravans Case, the Industrial Court (in my view, rightly) declined to exercise such authority, saying it had none.

So, also, there is much confusion as to the nature of unions as such. True, a union is a 'combination of workmen'; but it appears to be quite overlooked that a trade union has a quasi-corporate identity quite distinct from the members of which it is made up. It is, in fact, already in the eyes of the law an institution. This institution may—or may not—be on the side of the workmen in any dispute with their employer. If the Establishment has its way, such institutions will be afforded whatever legal powers are necessary to 'control' their members and to give contractual authority to their industrial agreements—which, incidentally, they already make as principals and not as *agents* for their members.

It seems to me that we should be much more concerned as to the collective rights of the workmen themselves. We need more attention to the horse, and less to the harness. I support the view that the smaller the part played by legal sanctions in the processes of collective bargaining the better. Experience of the intervention of the law in such matters in Australia and in the United States (the land of lawyers and injunctions) seems to confirm that though the law makes a good lines-man, it makes a pretty foul player. **J. Hendy.**

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THE LEFT IN THE UNITED STATES

John Williamson

EVERYONE is aware that the American scene is a lively one—strikes, militancy among workers, great nationwide demonstrations for Negro rights and for peace in Vietnam. But, as a result of all these developments, is there coalescing a Left movement with a certain national coherence based on a common outlook?

It is too early to assert authoritatively that such a Left movement is in existence. But what is not only new, but indicative of what can emerge, is the new outlook and the higher level on which the thinking and activities of these varied mass movements are unfolding, and the drawing together of some of them in common outlook and joint actions. All this evolves unevenly. It has not yet reached a point where one can speak with finality of a new stage of development on the American scene. Yet it is promising, tremendously interesting and merits close watching.

The most dynamic force and articulate political movement of the last decade has been the irrepressible upsurge of the Negro people for equal rights. While the issues involved should have concerned the entire nation, it was only a section of the white community and equally of the trade union movement that joined in united action. Slowest of all to move were the top leaders of the craft unions personified by AFL-CIO president Geo. Meany. Yet the Negro in America is the most proletarian of any group. Though only one-tenth of the nation's population, it supplies nearly one-fourth of its industrial working force. From the very beginning the issue of jobs was central in the nationwide confrontation of the Negro Freedom Movement as was seen in the great Washington March in 1963.

It is today recognised that a necessary aspect of the national fight for Negro rights is the fight against poverty. To exercise the equal rights they are fighting for necessitates that they have the economic status that this requires—whether it be jobs, houses, use of restaurants or other public establishments, training for skilled work and equal wages. These questions open the door to the fight against slums and to joining trade unions.

In the industrial metropolis of Chicago this united fight is finding expression. A mass meeting of 14,000, sponsored by the Chicago Freedom Movement and supported by sections of the trade unions,

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heard the Rev. Martin Luther King call for a war against the slums. He described the terrible conditions and said:

> The slum is little more than a domestic colony which leaves its inhabitants dominated politically, exploited economically, segregated and humiliated at every turn.

Recognising the need for an alliance between the trade unions and the Negro Freedom Movement, the Rev. King met 75 Chicago trade union leaders from steel, auto, electrical, teamsters, shoe, clothing and other unions, at a luncheon sponsored by the Packinghouse Workers Union and separately spoke to 200 shop stewards of the union.

King emphasised the 'mutual interests and concern' of the two movements in waging war against poverty and said a major field for expansion of the trade unions in Chicago are the hundreds of thousands of poorly paid Negro workers as well as the 100,000 unemployed. He recalled the mass struggles of the workers in steel, motor car, packinghouse, rubber and other industries in the 1930s to establish their unions and said 'it was no accident that many of the techniques and methods' of the Negro Freedom Movement have already been 'tested and tried by the labour movement'. These initial moves towards alliance have great promise. Beyond the organising in the trade unions of the poorly paid Negro worker in South and North and the accompanying greater white support against the white racialists, new developments within the trade unions themselves can be foreseen and, most fundamental of all, it would increase the possibility of the Negro Freedom Movement itself drawing anti-monopoly conclusions from its own experiences.

While Vice-President Humphrey declares 'We are going to be in Asia for a long, long time' the American people in growing numbers have decidedly different opinions and the demand to end the war in Vietnam is assuming unprecedented proportions. This is reflected in public opinion polls such as the Louis Harris poll where 51 per cent favoured arbitration of the war by the United Nations; the National Opinion Poll where 88 per cent want Johnson to negotiate with the National Liberation Front; the Gallup Poll where only 50 per cent now support Johnson's policies in Vietnam; and a poll in a typical mid-west industrial city—Akron, Ohio—where 52 per cent voted for U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam and 73 per cent for national elections even if the Vietcong win.

Impressive over the past months has been the steady flood of peace adverts in major newspapers; the establishment of Trade Unionists for Peace in Detroit and New York; the organised

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involvement of thousands of clergymen; the rise of committees of veterans of former wars; and the outpouring of 200,000 marchers in 70 cities demanding an end to the war in Vietnam. The *New York Post* writes that no American war ever caused 'such profound uneasiness' and says 'you hear the same things said in Miami or Las Vegas as you do in New York'.

However the *new features* to be noted are the merging of the great struggles for Negro rights with the fight to end the war in Vietnam; the developments within the Democratic Party itself around Vietnam and how it is becoming a central feature of the primaries; and the slight beginnings of trade union involvement in the peace campaign. The leaders of the older middle-class, and heavily white-subsidised Negro organisations, like Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and W. Young of the National Urban League, still deny a link exists between the civil rights struggle and the fight for peace. But gradually the new Southern-based Negro mass organisations are speaking out. At first they only approved the right of their leaders, like Rev. Martin Luther King, to express their wishes, but during the past two months they have officially declared:

> We believe that the moment is now opportune and the need urgent to reassess our position and seriously examine the wisdom of prompt withdrawal from Vietnam (SCLC).
>
> We believe there is a close relationship between the use of violence and repression in Vietnam and its use in our own country (SCEF).

On this issue the young people in the Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee go beyond the Rev. King and his associates. Through its leader, John Lewis, it declared 'its opposition to U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam', charged that the Government had been 'deceptive' in claims of concern for the Vietnamese people, and declared its support of those 'who are unwilling to respond to the military draft' which would compel them to contribute 'to U.S. aggression'. Julian Bond, a leader of these young Negroes, was ousted from the Georgia State Legislature to which he was elected. Re-elected, Bond still has not yet been seated, because of his opposition to the war in Vietnam.

The absence of a mass third progressive party (for reasons we cannot deal with here) has meant that labour and the other popular mass movements have generally tended to establish alliances with and find expression within the Democratic Party, since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Today, the ending of the war in Vietnam is in the centre of the coming Congressional campaigns and is already

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a sharp issue in the primaries in New York, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon and Massachusetts. Typical is the 17th Congressional District in New York, where the 'peace candidate' declares he deplores the bombing of North Vietnam, says there is 'deep uneasiness in the Democratic Party' over Johnson's Vietnam policy and pledges if elected he will vote against any appropriations for the war in Vietnam.

Significant also was the holding of a meeting of 6,000 Democratic ward workers or door-bell ringers. Held under the auspices of the Foreign Policy Council of New York Democrats, the chairman opened the meeting by stating: 'We are here to openly proclaim our dissatisfaction with the President's foreign policy, particularly in Vietnam'. The main speakers were U.S. Senator Wayne Morse and Gerald Hill, president of the California Democratic Council—indicating the same thinking in places 3,000 miles apart.

A Voters' Peace Pledge Campaign has been launched by the Organisation for a Sane Nuclear Policy (American equivalent to CND but less militant) and the Women's Strike for Peace. They have convened a national conference in Washington on May 14 of 2,160 delegates to be followed the next day with a national demonstration. Before the public demonstration the delegates will line up in alphabetical order of their states, in front of the White House, and dramatically deposit over a million voters' pledges to support only those candidates who stand for ending the war in Vietnam.

In contrast to 15 years ago when American youth were labelled 'the silent generation', today America is being set on fire by its younger generation. The 'New Left', as it likes to call itself, is on the move—for civil rights for Negroes, against poverty and slums, for peace and ending of the war in Vietnam, for the right to hear Communist views, etc. Their militancy and courage is outstanding. At the beginning they kept themselves separated and concerned themselves only with a single particular aspect of the struggle. Today there is an overlapping and merging of the struggles they participate in. It is comprised of many separate organisations and of those of no organisation. While well known for their militant activity, they also conduct a prolific and sharp ideological argument, reflecting great confusion. In revolt against the 'status quo', sceptical of all existing organisations and leaders, doubtful about the role of most adults—they are groping for answers to the burning problems of their day.

They will accept no established programmes or theories. Many of them claim they have no ideology and certainly there is no agree-

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ment on any one ideology. They adopt a purist and sectarian approach, angrily denouncing compromise or coalition with what it calls 'mainstream political forces', which covers almost all existing organisation. This leads many times to their isolation. Nevertheless they are very much a part of the American scene. They have fought in universities and colleges for the right to turn out in their thousands to hear American Communists, yet they are equally sceptical of Marxism. Being mostly middle class in origin or influence, they have no appreciation of the role of the working class and have a hostility to the trade unions as part of 'the Establishment'.

The experiences of this 'New Left' in the struggles they so heroically participate in; the dialogue on 'the way out' of American dead-end society that is actively participated in by members of the Du Bois Youth Clubs and by Communists; all give an assurance of the growth of clarity and understanding and direction of purpose for many amongst these hundreds of thousands.

Although slowest of all, there are signs of new thinking in the ranks of the trade unionists. Dissatisfaction found expression in the turning out of office of old leaders in such trade unions as steel, electrical manufacture, teachers, local government employees and others—not yet on a left or right basis. The New York Transport Workers' Union tied up the city for 11 days in defiance of national and local governments and AFL-CIO president Geo. Meany and won substantial wage demands.

Resistance within the trade union leadership has been broken to joining the fight for full rights for the Negro people and the first steps taken for united struggle in the tasks ahead. Gradually more leaders are associating themselves with UAWU national secretary, Emil Mazey, clothing workers' union secretary, Rosenbloom and West Coast dockers' union leader, Harry Bridges, who have taken sharp issue with the reactionary practice of AFL-CIO president Geo. Meany in giving full support to the U.S. war in Vietnam.

As a natural part of these new developments and the groping for broad unity of all progressive forces to challenge American imperialism, the Communist Party of the USA has just issued for discussion *A New Programme*. It is a 128-page book and it is made public with a request that the working people 'join with us Communists to write the final finished document'. Its scope can be seen by the titles of its six sections: A Society in Crisis; The World Setting; The Path Ahead; The Socialist Goal; Our Relations with Others; and The Communist Party.

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The programme emphasises that it 'charts a course ranging from the most effective conduct of battles to defend and advance the people's interests today to the alternate socialist reorganisation of society. . . .' It states the position of the CPUSA on the struggle for democracy under capitalism and socialism; it gives a basic answer to the problems flowing from automation as well as towards the trade unions and their leadership; it analyses the Negro Freedom Movement and the struggle for peace; it states the attitude towards the two old parties, the formation of a new mass political party as well as independent candidates; and it is a guide to the emergence of a political Left current that will be a decisive factor in America.

While emphasising the 'special viewpoint' of the Communist Party based on Marxism, in dealing with the importance of Left Unity it says 'there is one Left, new and old, with all the variations and differences we have noted' and that through discussion 'the basis can be found for unity that will become ever firmer'.

LABOUR MONTHLY

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GREETINGS

(*It was in spring 1921 that the project of publishing* Labour Monthly *as a Magazine of International Labour was carried through and the first number was ready in June, being published on July 1st. The month was also the birthday of the newly appointed Editor, whose 70th birthday will occur as we go to press with the Special Number to be published in July 1966.*

For this anniversary, greetings have come from every part of the world as well as from this country. As a foretaste we print in this month of June letters from three Members of Parliament and from the first to arrive of many messages from the Commonwealth. Next month we shall be printing others from all over the world.—Editorial Board, LM.)

1. From Friends in Britain

EMRYS HUGHES, M.P.:

For a socialist magazine to continue for 45 years under the same editorship is something of a miracle in British journalism and the *Labour Monthly* has been able to do this largely because it has had such an able and distinguised editor like Mr. Palme Dutt, with whom I have not always agreed, but whose articles I have always found to be well informed and stimulating.

SYDNEY SILVERMAN, M.P.:

I would like to convey my congratulations to *Labour Monthly* on celebrating its 45th Anniversary and I entirely agree that this is a really notable event in working-class journalism, both in Britain and internationally. I would also like to convey my personal congratulations to *Labour Monthly's* devoted and distinguished Editor, R. Palme Dutt, who I am glad to count among my friends.

MRS. RENEE SHORT, M.P.:

Many congratulations on reaching your 45th birthday! This is indeed an achievement for any magazine but it is especially so for a journal that puts a working-class point of view. There are too few organs of this kind on the journalistic horizon today and you are to be congratulated on keeping the flag flying! May you long continue to do so!

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2. From Friends in the Commonwealth

CHEDDI JAGAN, Leader of the People's Progressive Party, British Guiana:

I wish on my own behalf and that of the People's Progressive Party to join in commemorating the 'double event'—the 45th Anniversary of *Labour Monthly* and the 70th Birthday of its Editor, R. Palme Dutt. *Labour Monthly* can be proud of the fact that the seeds which it has sown have borne fruit. You championed the cause of the working class, of socialism and national liberation when capitalism, imperialism and colonialism were strong and looked invincible. You have uncompromisingly opposed the Cold War policies of the Churchill-Truman axis, staunchly supported the cause of the colonial peoples for freedom, beginning with the independence struggle of the Indian people. Today socialism has become a world system, embracing one-third of the population of the world. Of the remainder, nearly two-thirds who live in the imperialist dominated countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, are now engaged in a gigantic struggle to free themselves from colonialist and neo-colonialist chains. *Labour Monthly* can take credit for the fact that millions of people in the 'underdeveloped' 'third world' are today embracing socialism. Continue with your magnificent work of exposure of the hypocrisy of the Anglo-American imperialists, who prattle about freedom and democracy and the rule of law while they wield the 'big stick' in defence of the status quo. To R. Palme Dutt go our best wishes in his retirement after a busy and fruitful career as an author, and political leader. His works will always be a guiding light to those who take the political stage in the future. And to *Labour Monthly*, we say many more years of fighting journalism.

STANLEY B. RYERSON, Editor, *The Marxist Quarterly*, Toronto, Canada:

It is with a deep sense of gratitude and warmest fraternal esteem that the members of the editorial board of *The Marxist Quarterly* extend greetings to Comrade R. Palme Dutt on his 70th birthday and to *Labour Monthly* on its 45th Anniversary under his editorship. For us, as for so many supporters of Marxism in Canada, the name of Palme Dutt is that of a revered and well loved teacher. We owe him a massive debt, accumulated over the years: for his writings in *Labour Monthly*, his studies of Fascism and Social Revolution, on India, on the Crisis of the British Empire. In them

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all—especially in the 'Notes of the Month'—we have found consistently penetrating insights into the complexities of world development and the class struggle on all continents; an extraordinarily helpful joining of vividly concrete illustration with illuminating and lucid generalisation; a trenchant polemic militancy (with wit a barbed weapon!)—all of it born of a deep political wisdom and oneness with the struggles of the British and international working class. Working-class scholarship in Canada, in the study of the colonial past, of the monopoly-capitalist present, of the external network of imperialist relationships, and of the forces making for revolutionary change, draws on the work of Palme Dutt as a theorist of Marxism-Leninism. Palme Dutt's whole life-work is an outstanding and inspiring expression of working-class internationalism, of combative solidarity with the national-liberation struggles, with the countries of the Socialist camp, with the pioneer builders of the foundations of Communism in the Soviet Union. May many long years of creativity and success-crowned struggle be yours!

MALCOLM SALMON, for the Editorial Board, *Guardian* Newspaper, Melbourne, Australia:

We feel it a high honour to send our congratulations to Comrade Palme Dutt on the occasion of his 70th birthday. He has long displayed a combination of qualities which place him, we believe, in the front rank of Marxist-Leninist writers of the 20th Century.

In Australia we know him mainly by his writings, and these have been consistently most impressive over a long period. In his books, like *Fascism and Social Revolution* and *The Problem of India* he has shown a masterly capacity to sum up whole epochs of human history. His 'Notes of the Month' carried on in *Labour Monthly* for many hundreds of months, have never lost their freshness, power of thought and dynamic quality. His depth of insight, his brilliance of style, his scholarship and capacity for research, his brilliance in demolishing the myths and frauds of reaction, his ability to paint history on a broad canvas and at the same time to dissect the smallest detail, have made his 'Notes of the Month' a truly remarkable contemporary record of the whole post-1917 era.

It is appropriate that this should also be the occasion of the 45th Anniversary of *Labour Monthly*. The journal by its consistent high quality and its unbroken publication over decades, has left a mark on the political thinking of all English-speaking peoples. The contribution of Palme Dutt and of *Labour Monthly* to the cause of communism and the labour movement has been great indeed.

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MEMORIES OF GALLACHER

Compton Mackenzie

IF I look back along the eighty-three years of what Willie Gallacher calls my 'amazingly retentive memory' I can recall very few figures from that crowded past of such complete integrity as Willie Gallacher. That integrity is manifest on every page of his last memoirs.* There is nowhere a sign of self-esteem. When he points out how right he was in forecasting this or that state of affairs and this or that behaviour by an individual, he avoids the faintest suggestion of complacency and convinces his readers that he would have so much rather been wrong than right. Gallacher had an eye that was merciless in piercing a man's shell of pretence and a tongue that was equally merciless in describing what his eye had exposed.

During the Spanish Civil War he asked Ernest Hemingway to introduce three young Americans in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion who were to give a broadcast from Madrid to the United States. Hemingway refused; when Gallacher asked him why, Hemingway told him that he had his public to think of.

> He kept muttering about his public not understanding and when I told him it was his chance to make them understand he just sat and stared at me. I said to myself, this is a big sap.

When Gallacher got home he wrote the story of this incident, but his paper would not publish it because it was too personal and probably libellous.

> The libel laws have spoilt many a good article . . . slash! goes the blue pencil and there's nothing more to be done.

To this observation the publishers append the note. 'True, we have had to cut several pungent observations out of this present work.' I bet they had! Still, a wealth of pungent observations did escape that nervous pencil.

At the time when Joynson-Hicks was making an ass of himself as Home Secretary over allegedly obscene books and allegedly seditious Communists, Willie Gallacher and others were arrested and brought before Sir Chartres Byron at Bow Street, preliminary to a ludicrous trial at the Old Bailey. George Bernard Shaw offered to stand bail for Gallacher.

> Sir Chartres Byron would have been an ideal subject for Dickens: very pompous and fully conscious of his high responsibility for the safety of the

* 'The Last Memoirs of William Gallacher', *Lawrence & Wishart*, 320 pp., 45s.

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realm. He looked with obvious disfavour on the culprits who lined the dock. When Shaw was called to enter the witness box and take the oath as a guarantee for the bail of £200, the majestic fellow looked at him, not without a certain air of scorn, and barked: 'Mr. Shaw, are you worth £200?' Shaw moved his head from side to side and made answer in a tone of regret: 'I wouldn't like to say that'. Then, brightening up, he added, 'But I've *got* two hundred pounds'. There was a burst of laughter in the court, and almost a burst blood-vessel on the bench. 'Mr. Shaw, please remember you're not in the theatre now!'

The tale of the various months Gallacher spent in prison is absorbing, and always as one reads one knows that it was exactly like that.

Even more absorbing is the tale of that visit to Russia to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International.

> Back we got on the train for the last weary lap to Leningrad. . . . A car met us at the Station and took us to the Hotel Europa, where we washed and went to the dining-room. Two hungry voyagers—how we looked forward to a good meal! . . . The head-waiter, in orthodox dress, bowed; we bowed in return. Down the room two other waiters bowed; we bowed again. There was a long table with decanters, and flowers in front of each place; big glasses, small glasses, large knives and forks, large spoons and a variety of smaller ones. I smiled at Clarke as the waiters pulled out our chairs and got us seated. We were served—each with a small potato ball, a chunk of black bread and a glass of tea. On that we had to feast with the addition of a pink-coloured liquid from one of the decanters.

Gallacher had an interview with Lenin in Moscow, which he repeats with obvious exactitude. The journey back to England as stowaways over the Arctic is a marvellous Odyssey, but it must be read from beginning to end and must not be spoilt by extracts. Tempted though I be to tell the story of Sylvia Pankhurst's appearance, I deny myself.

During the First World War, Lloyd George came to Glasgow to try to allay the mood of resentment among the workers. A deputation awaited upon him at the Central Hotel.

> Lloyd George gave us a welcome, and offered a box of cigars. 'No, no,' I told him, 'A bad start.' He took it in his stride. 'I agree with you.' He smiled round the company. 'I'd prefer a pipe myself', and out it came.

This story reminded me of the first time I met Willie Gallacher about thirty years ago. Wilfred Macartney gave a dinner at Simpson's in the Strand to which he invited Willie Gallacher, Harry Pollitt and myself.

When we were offered the menu and asked to choose our dinner Harry Pollitt and I chose oysters or lobster to be followed by the famous saddle of mutton. While Pollitt and I were choosing our luxurious meal, Willie Gallacher was casting an eye down the bill of

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fare with an expression of disapproval the most censorious Puritan might have envied. At last he put a finger on one of the items. 'I'll have some of this', he decided. 'This' was Shepherd's Pie costing eighteen pence. Pollitt and I warmly welcomed our host's offer of champagne; Willie had a cup of tea.

After dinner Macartney called for cigars. He and Harry Pollitt helped themselves to large ones. I should have greatly enjoyed doing the same, but something told me that Willie would prefer a pipe. So I announced my intention of smoking a pipe. Willie's face lightened as he pulled out his pipe. 'Try some of my tobacco' he urged me, as he put his hand in the left-hand pocket of his coat and offered me his palm filled with black twist. We both puffed away; two days later there was a letter in the *Daily Telegraph* from Ronald Squires, complaining of having been gassed out of a famous restaurant by two people smoking pipes of foul tobacco.

I cannot do better than close this review of an honest and lovable man's honest and lovable book than with his own words:

> If representing the interests of the workers is mischief-making then I plead guilty. I have been a mischief-maker for forty-five years and in the course of those years I have had many associates, some of them sitting in more or less comfort on the Government front bench. They have now been recognised by the big shots of America as useful cogs in the Capitalist machine here in Western Europe. I can only say that their impudence in attacking the Communists for what they themselves claim to believe, is equalled only by the hypocrisy of their attitude towards the workers.

Willie might wrinkle his brow, if he were still with us, at my calling him a saintly man. Nevertheless, those are the words of a saintly man with an unquestioning belief in his own gospel.

BOOK REVIEWS

Brasshats and Bureaucrats, Part II

D. N. Pritt

Lawrence & Wishart, 320 pp., 42s.

THIS IS THE SECOND volume of Pritt's three-volume autobiography. The first covered his development up to the outbreak of the war in 1939 and his expulsion from the Labour Party. The present deals with his parliamentary and extra-parliamentary battles until the rejection by North Hammersmith in 1950. It is a little looser in time pattern because the nature of several of its themes—the struggle for civil liberties, against fascism, anti-Sovietism and anti-Semitism, the duties of an MP to his constituents—of course is open-ended and the story of such battles necessarily brings in illustrative field-reports from earlier and later. The third (one can guess) will bring in the extraordinary extension of his last phase as a lawyer until his name and personality became known, and alternatively revered or feared, all over the earth wherever colonialism and imperialism are challenged.

Three things specially stand out from this volume. The first is implicit in the title. Here is a cure for liberal

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and Social Democratic illusions about the neutrality of the State. This book shows the meaning of the word 'Establishment'. As we grow up we learn to respect certain 'goods' such as truth, fair play, justice. Respect for them becomes so natural-seeming, lip-service so general, it is easy for us to assume that public institutions around us, government, the leadership of political parties, the services, the press etc.—in short the Brasshats and the Bureaucrats—respect them in sooth. Pritt's documentation and anecdote show that they do not, at least wherever their existence as leading organs of the society they serve is in jeopardy. It shows, too, what happens to the leadership even of what was in origin a class-based mass party, when it steers in the direction of maintaining, not altering, capitalist society. This is simple, illustrative, additional reading bringing Lenin's *State and Revolution* right up to our immediate past.

The second is its significance as a corrective of historical falsification of the period covered. The hope for mankind consists in the fact that man is an animal capable of communication and so of sharing and learning rapidly by experience. Unfortunately the conservative powers-that-be know this and have at their disposal means of muddying the waters and burking issues on a scale so huge that by the time unfortunate youth leaves school, historical experience is left shadowed in the dark. Here, as elsewhere and at other times in his life, Pritt is a searchlight. Youth, revolted and indignant at what cannot be concealed from it, because it is contemporarily happening before its eyes, in Vietnam, will find here much packed in little, in the betrayal of Greece, the building of Bonn, the lie about Korea, which will make what they have been mistaught slide back into the right place.

Third is the evidence about Pritt himself. He is unique. Parliamentary lawyers are a sacred caste to the Establishment. A brilliant member of the tribe who used his position in the Commons and eminence at the Bar not to join it, but to fight it, a man to whom courage and honesty are so natural he does not notice them and sail-trimming is a dirty word, whom Marxism enlightened and the love of those whose cause he never failed sustained and held safe from isolation —what a thorn beneath the skin! Never a judge professionally—ever in his career a Daniel come to judge them. A hundred years hence—or less, for history now moves so fast—when all those who now grind their teeth at him are buried, our descendants (and not only in Britain) will be counting him one of the truly great Englishmen.

IVOR MONTAGU.

Groundwork to Economic Planning

Joan Mitchell

Secker & Warburg, 316 pp., 45s.

THE MAJOR PART of this book describes Planning in Britain, from the war to Labour's National Plan of 1965. A Plan, we are told, 'is a statement of social purpose, made practical'. But although the techniques of planning are described and discussed, the social purpose is not, and the conclusion is reached that an 'incomes policy' is essential in 'mixed economies'. The book fully merits its George Brown foreword.

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ANNIVERSARY DOUBLE

IT would be difficult not to write about our 45th Anniversary party being held on June 30, because most of our letters this month dwelt on this event. The happy coincidence of our Editor's 70th birthday also falling in June has made very many friends of *LM* feel that this is a 'double' that calls for personal participation. Requests for reception tickets are flowing in, with many trade unions sending official delegates as guests. Messages arriving with ticket orders all seem to catch the spirit of the occasion, as in this one from the Home Counties: 'Although not usually a social animal, this is one party I don't intend to miss. Your 45 years of political survey is virtually history on parade and for one night at least I want to feel part of it.'

A Scottish friend says: 'It is a privilege to contribute, however inadequately, to an anniversary such as this—these 45 years would have been "sair trauchle" without *LM*.' The Durham reader who is making and donating our Birthday Cake will find many at the party who remember the cake she also contributed for our 40th Anniversary, and who can vouch for it as a work of art!

Neatly summing up is this letter from Middlesex: 'When we get the last 45 years into its true and historic perspective, the insight and leadership provided by *LM* and its Editor will be fully recognised. Happy birthday to both.'

Helen Falber.

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